Providing professional development (PD) opportunities to educators is a common method of improving self-efficacy to teach nutrition. There is a need for effective PD models aimed at increasing educator self-efficacy. Self-efficacy to teach nutrition and other health-related topics is important because previous studies have identified teaching self-efficacy to be strongly linked to the following:

- Educator effectiveness
- Teaching competence
- Curricular implementation
- Student outcomes

A PD program was designed for the Shaping Healthy Choices Program and implemented in FFY17. PD activities consisted of a 1 day in-person workshop and a 3 day in-person workshop, along with 10 hour-long meetings that were hosted over a webinar platform. The program utilized an action inquiry approach to PD which included formal education, peer-led education, coaching, and advanced professional learning. The program was intended to help educators understand and adopt an inquiry-based approach to learning and teaching while contributing to their knowledge base. Participant self-efficacy was assessed through a 15 question retrospective (post-then-pre) survey.

Among the 15 questions included in the Retrospective Survey About Teaching Inquiry-Based Nutrition, 11 questions exhibited statistically significant increases from pre-to-post (some of which are highlighted in the Table to the right). Results indicated that participants (n=10) experienced:

- Increased confidence to teach nutrition (Q1)
- Improvements in teaching efficacies (Q2)
- Improved facilitation skills for guiding inquiry in the classroom (Q3)
- Increased belief that using an inquiry-based approach is an effective way to learn (Q4) and teach (Q5)

Future directions for research in this specific area as it relates to the Shaping Healthy Choices Program should include the evaluation of student learning outcomes as result of a comprehensive, sustained, and intensive approach to improving educators' effectiveness through collaborative learning and participation in a continual PD program.

Further research should be conducted to investigate how educator self-efficacy is associated with student achievement and academic performance.